

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claims 18, 33 and 37 in accordance with the following listing showing the status of all claims in the application.

1-17 (Canceled)

18. (Currently Amended) A system for sharing contact information, said system comprising:

- (a) a central hub that maintains and distributes contact information;
- (b) plural terminals that electronically communicate with the central hub; and
- (c) plural contacts, each said contact having an associated contact record that is maintained by the central hub,

wherein upon receipt of a contact-record request from one of the plural terminals, the central hub automatically transmits a matching contact record to the requesting terminal, ~~and~~

wherein each of the plural terminals has an ability to retrieve any of the contact records maintained by the central hub for said plural contacts, but the central hub implements procedures to preclude mass downloading of contact information, and

wherein said procedures to preclude mass downloading of contact information include at least one of: (i) limiting a number of matching contact records provided to a requesting end user, (ii) monitoring and restricting repeated broad searches conducted by a same end user, (iii) monitoring and restricting repeated similar broad searches conducted across multiple end users, (iv) correlating reports of junk email from the contacts with broad searches conducted by registered end users, and (v) requiring the contact-record request to include extra information

regarding the matching contact record, in addition to information that uniquely identifies the matching contact record, in order to retrieve the matching contact record.

19. (Previously Presented) A system according to claim 18, wherein the central hub permits the contacts to limit fields in their corresponding contact records which may be searched in response to contact-record requests from the plural terminals.

20. (Previously Presented) A system according to claim 18, wherein said procedures to preclude mass downloading of contact information include limiting a number of contact records that may be downloaded by each end user.

21. (Previously Presented) A system according to claim 18, wherein said procedures to preclude mass downloading of contact information include limiting a number of matching contact records provided to each requesting end user.

22. (Previously Presented) A system according to claim 18, wherein said procedures to preclude mass downloading of contact information include monitoring and restricting repeated broad searches conducted by a same end user.

23. (Previously Presented) A system according to claim 18, wherein said procedures to preclude mass downloading of contact information include monitoring and restricting repeated similar broad searches conducted across multiple end users.

24. (Previously Presented) A system according to claim 18, wherein said procedures to preclude mass downloading of contact information include correlating reports of junk email from the contacts with broad searches conducted by registered end users.

25. (Previously Presented) A system according to claim 18, wherein the central hub requires the contact-record request to include extra information regarding the matching contact record, in addition to information that uniquely identifies the matching contact record, in order to retrieve the matching contact record.

26. (Previously Presented) A system according to claim 25, wherein the information that uniquely identifies the matching contact record and the extra information are selected from contact information for a contact corresponding to the contact-record request.

27. (Previously Presented) A system according to claim 25, wherein the central hub cuts off an end user for having too many invalid contact-record requests.

28. (Canceled)

29. (Previously Presented) A system according to claim 18, wherein each of the contacts is provided with an ability to make the associated contact record for said contact available through general search queries.

30. (Previously Presented) A system according to claim 18, wherein the matching contact record includes plural different contact information fields and is in a format that permits unambiguous identification of said plural different contact information fields upon application of pre-specified mechanical rules.

31. (Previously Presented) A system according to claim 18, wherein a format in which the matching contact record is transmitted from the central hub to the requesting terminal is selected by the central hub based on a preference expressed by the user.

32. (Previously Presented) A system according to claim 18, wherein in response to the contact-record request the central hub transmits plural matching contact records to the requesting terminal.

33. (Currently Amended) A system according to claim 18, wherein the central hub records identities of end users that have stored a particular contact record and notifies at least some of said end users when the particular contact record subsequently is modified.

34. (Previously Presented) A system according to claim 18, wherein upon receipt of the matching contact record by the requesting terminal, the matching contact record automatically is displayed in a manner so as to allow a user of the requesting terminal to edit individual information fields within the matching contact record prior to causing the matching contact record to be stored into an electronic address book of the requesting terminal.

35. (Previously Presented) A system according to claim 18, wherein upon receipt of the matching contact record by the requesting terminal, the matching contact record automatically is stored into an electronic address book of the requesting terminal.

36. (Previously Presented) A system according to claim 18, wherein the contact-record request is initiated by, and the matching contact record is received by, an electronic address book program running on the requesting terminal.

37. (Currently Amended) A system according to claim 18, wherein the contact-record request is generated by entering information into fields of ~~the~~ a user interface, and wherein upon receipt of the matching contact record additional fields in the user interface automatically are filled in.

38. (Previously Presented) A system according to claim 18, wherein the contact records maintained by the central hub are accessible by members of the general public.